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TAGS: CD CM PGOV PINR PREL
SUBJECT: CHADIAN ACADEMIC EXILE IN CAMEROON SEEKS USG
SUPPORT

Classified By: Pol/Econ Chief Scott Ticknor for reasons 1.4 (d) and (e)

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¶1. (S) On March 26, Pol/Econ Chief met with Professor Balaam Facho, a Chadian veterinarian, professor at the University of Ndjemena, former government minister (including Foreign Minister) and political figure, who said he currently serves as Coordinator of the Chad-based "Groupe de Reflection et d'Action Citoyenne pour la Paix" (Group for Reflection and Citizen's Action for Peace). Facho recounted how he had escaped Chad after receiving a tip-off that the authorities planned to detain him during the recent fighting. He fled to Cameroon and has been hiding in Yaounde for the past month. He claimed to be a longtime close friend of the U.S. Embassy in Ndjemena.

¶2. (S) Facho is seeking USG financial and material support for action that would lead to a change of government in Chad. Specifically, he asked for material support to publish and distribute opposition publications from a base in Cameroon. He also asked for funding to help opposition figures travel into, out of, and within Chad. Facho hoped for at least \$1 million in funding, adding that he is prepared to travel to the U.S. to discuss his ideas with USG officials.

¶3. (S) Facho stated that he did not support violent means to overthrow the Deby regime; rather, he believed he has the stature to head a southern-based opposition/civil society coalition that could apply sufficient pressure (through agitation and propaganda) to force Deby into holding a National Conference. The Conference would select a new government, after which Deby would leave Chad, Facho envisioned. Facho (a Christian) argued that Islamic groups in Chad are supporting terrorism, Deby is unable to stop them, and that a new government in Chad would better serve USG counter-terrorism interests.

¶4. (S) Facho said he was hoping to go to Germany soon, where he has been invited to lecture, but he was waiting for his visa. He said he did not feel safe in Cameroon and felt he was wearing out his welcome with friends here. Pol/Econ Chief agreed to pass on his information and request to Washington but made no commitments about future follow-up.

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